

## Feeling, Not Sensing, After Death

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What happens to the experiences we encountered as humans when we die? Do we see each other when we die, more importantly, those we had loved as a human? Do we get to experience the flutter in our souls like when we meet someone new and the way they say “hello” leaves you enamoured by the beauty in their breath? Do we get to experience the warmth of the purest comfort like when in moments of deafening silence someone reaches out to hold your hand? Do we get to experience the ambiance of another’s aura so strong it makes you want to step closer into their presence even if a word will not be shared?

The question of what happens when we die may just be the most intriguing of them all. Unfortunately, I am not a ghost, and could not tell you what definitely occurs when we sink our lungs in and close our eyes for the last time. However, one can speculate. If the theories of reincarnation, Heaven and Hell, or void of nothingness fail to convince you, surely there are more possibilities to contemplate - especially ones that focus on experiencing the afterlife through your consciousness.

Human consciousness is [defined](#) as “the quality or state of being aware especially of something within oneself” and “the state of being characterized by sensation, emotion, volition, and thought.” It is described by a [Scientific American](#) article as “everything you experience,” and told by a [National Post](#) article to be “a by-product of the brain.” While the exact definition of consciousness is unclear, this mystifying energy is still subject to the Laws of Thermodynamics. Law [one](#) being, “energy can neither be created nor destroyed - only converted from one form of energy to another.” For this reason, it appears impossible that a form of energy such as the human consciousness will be destroyed upon physical death - rather it will change. How so though?

Most would love to see in death those they loved in life, although that could be wishful thinking. Consider those who are born blind, they are incapable of the sense of sight, however no one with regards to any disabilities inhibiting their five senses (sight, sound, taste, touch, and hearing)

lacks the sense of intuition stemming from their consciousness. After death experiences have to be largely applicable to everyone in some consistent way, just like experiencing consciousness in life is uniform to all humans.

In terms of correlating this to the after death experience, think of it as a record and a record player; A person's consciousness being the record, and their sense of intuition being the needle on a record player. It would not take reading the cover of the record nor would it take hearing the music to know what record is being played, the individualized grooves on the record is enough to know what the record is. In other words, when humans die, it does not take the senses of either sight or sound to experience another's unique consciousness. We may not see or hear our loved ones, but we will feel their unique presence and know it is them through the intuition possessed by our consciousness.

This theory could also be connected to the teachings in Christianity and Islam where it is a common theme to feel for the presence of God and not needing to be shown His face or voice. As stated in the [Bible](#), "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." (John 20:29.) As stated in the [Hadith](#), "Blessed seven times are those who had faith in me and never saw me." (Musnad Ahmad 12168.) In other words, the main message here is that you have to intuitively feel. Perhaps this sway to not rely on your bodily senses could very well cross over into after death experiences.

Although seemingly contradictory to the teachings of Christianity and Islam, a quote from Siddhartha Gautama also prioritizes the conceptualization of relying on personal intuition, stating, "Do not believe in anything simply because you have heard it... But after observation and analysis, when you find that anything agrees with reason and is conducive to the good and benefit of one and all, then accept it and live up to it." While Siddhartha Gautama encourages thinking for oneself, which requires the intake of knowledge through bodily senses, the same message of trusting one's own sense of intuition applies to Buddhism too.

We established we may be able to feel the presence of our loved ones after death, but what else might we be able to experience? This is where philosophy comes into play with the idea of

animism. Most notably accepted by the Lakota Native Americans and Hindus, [animism](#) is the belief that everything including plants, animals, people, and objects possess a spirit. With that being said, could everything in this Universe have varying degrees of consciousness? An [MIT Press](#) article reads, “Consciousness is lived reality. It is the feeling of life.” If consciousness really is that widespread amongst all living organisms at the very least, that would mean our consciousness could have the ability to feel for other consciousnesses that may or may not be of a human’s.

When it comes down to the debate concerning what we as humans get to experience next when we die, the key is relying on your personal sense of intuition stemming from your consciousness rather than the senses we all are so heavily reliant on in our bodies. This sense of intuition just might lead us to be able to connect with the presence of those energy bodies that we once knew while we were in our human bodies; Which could easily expand past not only sensing humans but all forms of life. The differences in setting aside animism versus religion or spirituality provoke the next big question: is consciousness produced by the brain, or is the brain a means of processing consciousness?